

Exhibit 41

Kelsie J. Wendelberger
624 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

February 24, 2016

The Honorable Thomas M. Durkin
United States District Court
219 S. Dearborn St.
Chicago, IL 60604

Your Honor:

Thank you for your hard work and leadership in presiding over the case regarding J. Dennis Hastert. I am writing to you out of sincerity to offer a perspective of the impact Speaker Hastert has had on my life both in my years as a student and in my first months of professional work.

I first met Denny my freshman year at Wheaton College, in the 2011-2012 school year. We met briefly, and I learned from him during panel discussions and talks he did at the school. I was impressed by his intelligence and extensive professionalism in politics, but even more impressed by his humility and experiences growing up in small-town Illinois.

Having double-majored in international relations and economics, I spent most of my time in the then-called Hastert Center of Wheaton College. Each time I entered the building, I was reminded of the sacrifices and dedication that the former Speaker of the House made to create this center. (Not to mention the desire to give back by continuously returning to the college to speak with students.) In fact, the intentional collaboration of the disciplines in the Hastert Center is what led me to double-major in the first place.

Junior year of college is when I really got to know Speaker Hastert as a friend and mentor. After he guest-taught in one of my political science courses, I talked with him after class and he suggested we get coffee. I was honored that someone I so respected would make the time for me. That coffee led to talking together every time he traveled back to Wheaton from Washington, D.C. He mentored me and other students, teaching us the importance of working hard no matter the job, servant-leadership, and maintaining a strong faith in Christ through all trials and challenges. He shared stories of his time coaching in Illinois, and in his life in politics. He talked about his family and grandchildren often, and I could tell he held his family most highly above all other blessings in his life.

My senior year of college, I got accepted into a course entitled, "Leadership," which was co-taught by Speaker Hastert. He instilled in us what he thought were the most important qualities of leadership: purpose, passion, persistence, patience, and having a sacred heart – meaning seeking God in all things. Continuing my mentorship with him, Denny knew of my desire to live and work in Washington, D.C. Since money was tight, he kindly flew me out to meet with his colleagues at Dickstein-Shapiro LLP, and to interview with a few congressional offices. I took a

position as an intern at the law firm, and worked with him for the first part of summer before the indictment occurred.

In those weeks I worked closely with him, I want you to know the kind of man I saw: I saw a man who was one of the only left standing of the "good old days" in Washington. A man who said hello and helped everyone, no matter if it was the cleaning person in the basement of the Capitol or a Senator in his office. I saw a man who people literally stopped their cars in the middle of Constitution Avenue to greet, or paused in the midst of rushed hallway walks to thank for his integrity and service to the people of the United States. I befriended a man who always put the concerns of others before himself, even to his own detriment. I befriended a man who worked harder than anyone I have ever met because he believed that he still had more to give to the people of this country. I was mentored by a man whose values of tenacity, trustworthiness, and tender-heartedness will carry with me throughout my entire career.

Denny Hastert has and continues to be a friend and mentor to me. His strength even through these recent trials continues to impress me. He and Jean (his wife) are lovely to everyone they encounter, and I am sure you have experienced the same in your interactions with them.

Thank you so much for your time in reading my letter. I am only one of countless people Denny has greatly impacted. In pouring my heart out there is so much more I could write, but for now I thank you for your consideration in Denny Hastert's robust, noteworthy character and how he has so positively affected my life.

Highest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelsie J. Wendelberger", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Kelsie J. Wendelberger
United States Senate
Committee on the Budget